

Which International?

I

Speech delivered by Jean Longuet at the Berne Conference on "Socialist Responsibility and the War."

COMRADES: We are in agreement with our comrades, Kurt Eisner and Karl Kautsky, in all their criticism of the majority Social Democratic Party of Germany.

The Socialists of the world, in the tempest of the war, have all more or less yielded to chauvinism; but the majority Socialists of Germany have yielded much more than the others. [The delegates: Very good, very good!] Consequently, having condemned the chauvinistic elements in our midst, in a measure, we are condemning the majority Socialists of Germany much more strongly because of their stronger manifestations of chauvinism.

There was evident everywhere an anguished preoccupation with the problem of national defence; everywhere there was the tendency to maintain national unity against the foreigner. This preoccupation with national defense has, in a number of countries, and more particularly in Germany, degenerated into nationalism; precisely as the preoccupation with the "union sacrée" [party unity for national defense, suspension of the class struggle] in France has degenerated into governmentalism and ministerialism. [Bravo!]

In our country (France) we were in a more difficult position, because it was vanquished yesterday and invaded today; and consequently we had to participate in the national defense,—for more pressing reasons, higher reasons, than the world will easily understand, stronger reasons than those of the Socialists on the other side of the Rhine.

It is not less true that these preoccupations have to a certain extent animated all the others. When they have those who were true to the International raised themselves in protest. [Bravo!]

Comrades, we for our part have deeply regretted that the majority of the German Social-Democracy could not understand that, no matter what the Russian danger, it did not excuse the violation of Belgian neutrality.

There was a bitter sentiment, which made our struggle particularly difficult, when the German majority Socialists did not make their protest heard against the submarine warfare, against the deportation of civilians by the German General Staff. In that moment you, Socialists of Germany, neglected your duty; and we, the minority of the party in France, who have nothing to reproach ourselves with from the international point of view, are anxious to tell it to you. [Tres bien!]

We have also regretted that, at the moment of the Brest-Litovsk and Bucharest treaties, the German majority Socialists did not protest more than they did, no more than you did when the Socialists of Finland were crushed with the aid of the German Government. [Tres bien!]

Our Comrades Eisner and Kautsky have, with force and courage, told you with all the authority coming from their past sincere service to the cause of the proletarian International, told you all that I am telling you.

All this, comrades, does not obviate the other faults that were committed. If we have had in France a situation particularly difficult in view of the national defence and the integrity of our country and the sacred treasure that was deposited with us,—it is the idea and the policy of the International. And it is with regret that we must admit that in our midst also there were comrades who forgot the International.

We cannot, at this moment, fail to consider those who made the Stockholm Conference a failure, besides the German majority. There was a smaller but not less serious mistake of our French comrades of the old majority in opposing the Stockholm Conference. We considered the supreme interest of the proletariat of the world, and of France, to end the war as soon as possible. We thought at that moment that the renegade enterprise of German militarism, of which Kautsky spoke this morning, had failed, and consequently we could give peace a Socialist character, a thing we cannot accomplish to-day because nationalism and Imperialism, defeated in Berlin and Vienna, have, alas, raised their heads in Paris, London and Rome.

Well! We regret it, comrades. We say that the failure of the Stockholm Conference was a great misfortune, a grievous fault. We say that then we could have united the whole International.

In ending, Comrades, I want simply to examine our conclusions. To establish responsibility may have its use, but it is not sufficient. Must we draw a conclusion that includes the motives of Thomas? Or one in which it is asked that the German majority Socialists be excluded from the International? I do not think that Thomas seriously proposes that. There will be many more exclusions to make in many other parts

of Europe. [Renaudel: Which? No half words!]

This morning Kurt Eisner and Kautsky showed us with great force that there are important proletarian masses that have remained true to the old Social Democratic Party in Germany. We have no intention, I think, of excluding these proletarian masses from the International. [Tres bien!] Only, we say that the German Social-Democratic Party must come back to its old unity and ideas, tested and glorious, that have been adopted by all our international Congresses, for the past 25 years, on the basis of the Amsterdam Congress.

One word more: After Troelstra, and with him, I want to protest against the summary condemnation of the Bolshevik movement, and others, that we have heard here. The tactics of our Bolshevik comrades may be applicable to Eastern Europe. I do not know that we could transform the Russian tactics here. I know nothing and I want more information. But I want to say that to condemn and exclude them *a priori* is an impossible thing; the more so when it comes from the extreme right of our movement. [Tres bien!]

We are here to re-constitute the International solidarity of the workers, to make an end of the hatreds that the capitalists and the governments have created among the exploited masses, among the workers of the world. At the 1899 Congress of the French party in Marseilles, Wilhelm Liebknecht said:

"Between you, French workers, and us, German Socialists, there is a river of blood. It is not we who caused that river of blood to flow; it is our enemy, the bourgeoisie, it is Capitalism! Across that river of blood the workers of all countries must unite in the common struggle for their emancipation."

II

An Answer—Longuet, the Centre in France, and the New International.

THE Socialist Party of France, at its Congress the other day repudiated the Bolshevik-Spartan International, and recognized the Second International, which collapsed miserably during the war and the proletarian revolution, as still the International.

Until about a year ago, the official majority in the French Socialist Party consisted of uncompromising social-patriots, pro-war "Socialists." Then a new majority came into power, captained by Jean Longuet. The French party, under this new majority, pursued fundamentally the old policy, with compromises and pretty words characteristic of the centre. This new majority corresponds, roughly, with the Haase-Kautsky Independents of Germany, who are playing such a miserable and disastrous role in the Revolution. This new majority was characterized by the resolution which brought it into power at the Congress: the resolution favored national defense, it dodged on the Bolshevik issue, and was a tapeworm resolution capable of infinite "interpretation;" while the Loriot resolution, short and to the point, urging the struggle for immediate peace and the Social Revolution, and uncompromisingly accepting the Bolsheviks, was defeated. Loriot represents the Left Wing.

This new majority in the French Socialist Party, moreover, is equally characterized by its spokesman, Jean Longuet; and Longuet is characterized in his speech on "Socialist Responsibility and the War," delivered at the Berne Congress of the Great Betrayal, of the social-patriots, which we reprint above.

Longuet is a centrist. The centrist deals in compromises and the "trimming of ideas" to be agreeable to all. He hesitates, and is never direct and revolutionary. The interjection of Renaudel, a consistent social-patriot, "No half words," fittingly describes Longuet's attitude on fundamental issues.

This speech accepts the doctrine of "national defense" which smashed the International and betrayed Socialism.

This speech deprecates that "national defense" which degenerated into chauvinism—but chauvinism is an inevitable excrement of national defense; and this "defense" would be suicidal to militant Socialism even if it did not "degenerate into chauvinism."

This speech admits that "other" Socialists committed errors, but they were worse in Germany, and that therefore the German Social-Democracy was most to blame for the collapse of the International.

This speech bewails the fizzle of the Stockholm Conference, where the traitorous Socialists were to have gotten together to reconstitute the old International which had broken down, at a time when the Bolsheviks had issued a new order of the day to militant Socialism—the order to organize the new, the Third International of revolutionary Socialism.

This speech indicates that the majority Socialists of Germany are not to be excluded from the International—in other words, the speech is a plea for the yellow International.

The argument made in favor of this is that "there are important proletarian masses that have remained true to the old Social Democratic Party in Germany."

Bolshevikjabs

BUDAPEST, May 1.—Bela Kun today sent out a wireless stating that the report of the fall of the Hungarian Soviet administration is grossly exaggerated.

(Mayor Hylan of New York is very much concerned, of late, at the growing popularity of the color Red, and is inciting the Aldermen to pass ordinances forbidding its display.)

I pity Mayor Hylan, I pity him at dawn, I pity him at sun-set when I reflect upon the fact that when the sun comes up and coaxes Johnny out of bed it disregards Hizzoner's law, and comes up looking red. And even then it's not content but sometimes plays a second trick for when it settles down to rest its redder than a Bolshevik.

The New York Evening Mail, speaking of Edward N. Hurley, chairman of the Shipping Board, says: "Mr. Hurley pleads for big business in a big way. . . . His voice is the voice of the aroused determination of American enterprise to capture its full share of the trade of the reconstructed world." Presumably another war will settle what exactly is American big business' full share of the reconstructed world's trade.

Eugene V. Debs tells an interesting story: "I was awakened about two o'clock one morning by two railroad engineers and told that I must go with them to Chicago immediately to take charge of the Burlington strike. One of the engineers was Edward N. Hurley. . . ."

Debs took charge of the strike—he has always remembered that there were other people in the world besides Debs. Hurley, apparently, has always remembered that Hurley was in the world. It must be a source of satisfaction to him these days when he "pleads for BIG business in a big way" to know that the world has put its seal of approval on his course of action while it puts an iron padlock on the cell of the man who remembered too much.

But these are strange days and we wonder which man's appeal will be most successful.

Perhaps men, in the overalls of workers, will again awaken Debs in the middle of the night and tell him he must go with them immediately to Washington to take charge of the . . . Well, when you find out what he's to take charge of maybe you'll go and do it.

"Rome rushes 14 army divisions to Fiume," says a headline. One for each point!

Judging from the press reports Italy appears to think that if she got Fiume she would be able to build a much bigger foreign trade. Judging from the actions of the rest of Peace Conference it appears that Italy is right in so thinking.

"Italian Socialists quit Second International." In other words they endorsed the Manifesto and Program of the Left Wing.

(Continued from Preceding Column.)

Very true; and this, to the revolutionary Socialist, is a challenge to get the masses away by exposing and smashing this traitorous "Socialist" party which is betraying "important proletarian masses." But Longuet proposes that we include this party in the International, thereby bolstering up its prestige and prolonging its betrayal of the proletariat. Imagine an International that harbors the "Socialist" murderers of Karl Liebknecht and Rosa Luxemburg!

But Longuet says, of course, that the German majority party should return "to its old unity and ideas, tested and glorious." In the first place, this is impossible; in the second place, even if possible, it is undesirable.

The centrist speaks of the old unity and the old ideas. But they broke down, miserably and completely. Out of this collapse has come a new proletarian impulse and a new revolutionary Socialist movement. We cannot compromise with the old: we must repudiate it completely. We must not compromise. There is a challenge to Socialism, and we must accept this challenge: reorganize the Socialist movement on the basis of Bolshevik-Spartan policy and practice.

The French Socialist Party, dominated by the centre, apologizes and accepts the old, repudiates the Bolshevik-Spartan Communist International; the Italian Socialist Party, dominated by the left wing, repudiates the old and accepts the new Communist International. Which Socialism and which International, Comrades of the American Socialist Party?